

第1問 次の英文を読み、以下の問1と問2に答えなさい。

One of the most profound¹⁾ discoveries for me when I began visiting Japanese high schools was that teachers regularly refer to students as *kodomo*, “children.” (1) I was surprised not only by the idea, but also because in spite of four previous years spent in Japan, I had not realized that to Japanese the category *kodomo* extended to sixteen-, seventeen-, and eighteen-year-olds. That high school students might no longer be children or that they should be treated as adults are not ideas consciously²⁾ considered. The official age for adulthood in Japan is twenty, and cities across the land have public ceremonies (*seijin-shiki*) celebrating the transformation³⁾ to adult status. Perhaps this is an explanation, but the crucial⁴⁾ point is (2) the basic cultural difference between Japan and the United States.

The implications⁵⁾ are truly profound when we compare this sense of age in Japan to the American understanding that high school students are, if not adults, largely adult and properly viewed and treated as adults. Teachers as a rule lean quite readily to the point of view that extending the rights and duties of adulthood to teenagers is sound educational practice. American parents may have trouble releasing their hold on their children, but in most respects teenagers are “no longer children” in their eyes. We see the high school years as a time when sons and daughters gain independence rapidly, experimenting with alcohol, drugs, sexuality, cars, and earning their own money. Mixed signals on all these issues are sent by adults, who struggle to find a fitting definition to a fast-changing situation. We cannot think of adolescents⁶⁾ as children, yet they still have a way to go to qualify fully as adults. Such words as teenagers and adolescents help bridge the gap.

Japanese high school teachers in no way encourage their students to regard themselves as adults. In fact, it is their duty to prevent them from experimenting with adult pleasures and vices. Students are reminded of their obligation to family, school, and society. No one suggests they have rights.

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- 1) profound : 深い 2) consciously : 意識的に 3) transformation : 変化 4) crucial : 極めて重要な
5) implication : 意味合い、引き起こされるであろう結果 6) adolescent : 思春期の若者

問1 下線部(1)について、筆者はなぜ驚いたのか説明しなさい。

問2 筆者は下線部(2)が、日米の年齢観にどのように現れていると考えているか述べなさい。